

Friday 15 January 2021

Welcome to our latest news round-up from across the Dignity Group. Can't wait for the next issue? Then go to www.dignitygoodtogreat.co.uk to see the news, comment and get involved.

(P.S. Don't forget to print out a copy for any colleagues who don't have email!)

THE CARE THEY DESERVE

Announcing our new charity partner, fundraising plans and how you can get involved.



Every day, seven young people aged 13-24 hear the devastating words 'you have cancer'.

They will need specialist nursing care and support to fight the disease and there is only one UK charity dedicated to providing this.

Teenage Cancer Trust ensures cancer care tailored for young people is accessible within the NHS. It operates 28 specialist units and has expert nurses and youth support staff in hospitals throughout the country.

The aim is to give young people the very best care from the moment they are diagnosed. However, at this time Teenage Cancer Trust simply cannot reach everyone who needs their services.



With our help, this can change.

Making a difference

We've agreed a three year partnership with Teenage Cancer Trust, during which we'll make regular donations using funds generated by our crematoria's participation in an industry recycling scheme.

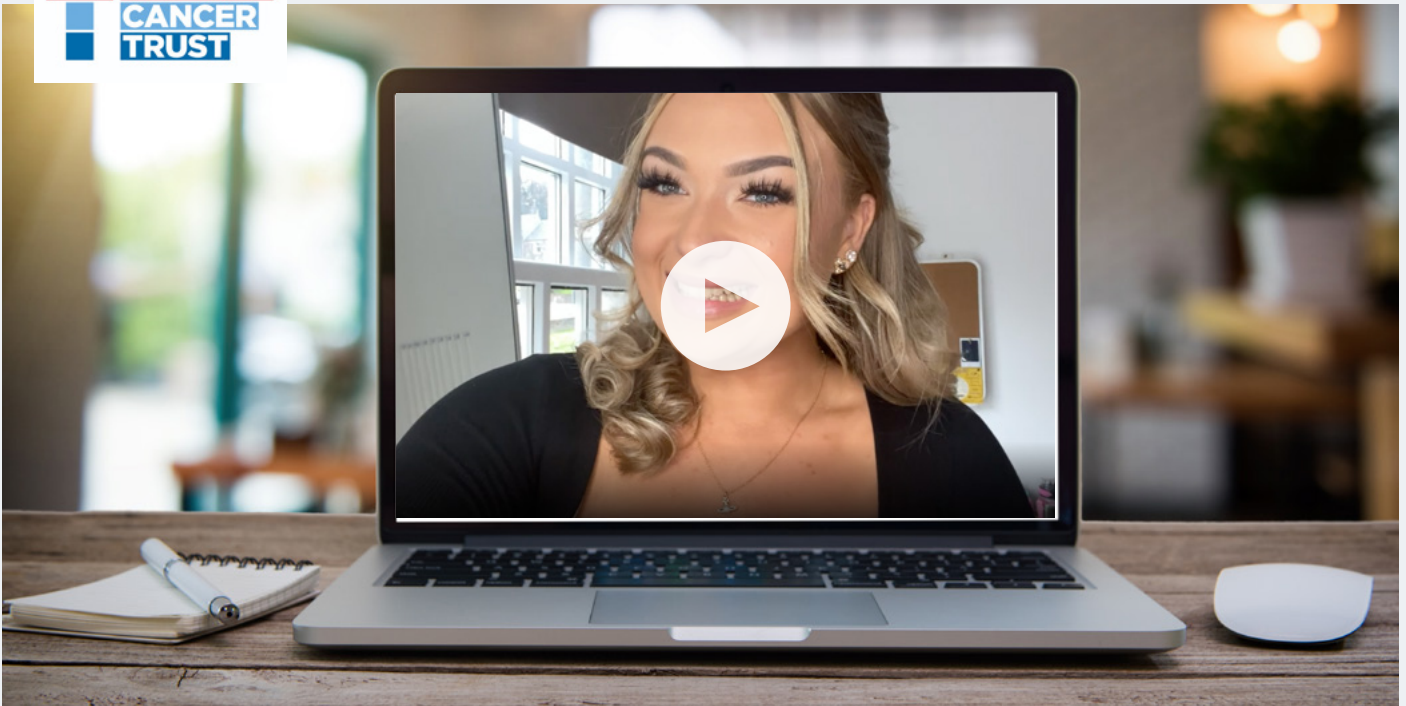
In addition, we all have the opportunity to raise money for



this fantastic cause and help spread the word on its vital work.

It might be a solo challenge like a sponsored walk, or perhaps you want to join forces with colleagues and come up with a creative fundraising idea you can deliver as a team.

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From bake-offs and bucket collections, to fancy dress days and fun runs, there are countless ways to get involved and have fun at the same time.

Transforming lives

Relationships, exams, careers, life plans – it's hard enough being a teenager, let alone having to cope with cancer.

Without the work of Teenage Cancer Trust, young people can end up being treated alongside children or elderly patients, isolating them when they most need support that's appropriate for their age group.

The charity's care and support puts young people in the best possible place, physically, mentally and emotionally, for their cancer treatment and beyond. It stops them missing out on all the normal things young people like to do.

“

This partnership and your generosity will help transform the lives of young people with cancer in the toughest of times.

”

Laura Mills, Corporate Account Manager for Teenage Cancer Trust, said: “It's amazing that Dignity wants to help young people facing cancer get the right care.

“We don't receive money from the government or NHS and rely on the compassion and goodwill of others to fund our expert nurses, support teams and 28 hospital units.

“This partnership and your generosity will help transform the lives of young people with cancer in the toughest of times.”

What happens next?

For now, the most important thing is introducing everyone to Teenage Cancer Trust and offering insight into what they do.

If you haven't already, please check out the [video](#) we've posted where you'll hear from Francesca Taylor-Draper and her family about the dramatic effect a cancer diagnosis had on their lives.

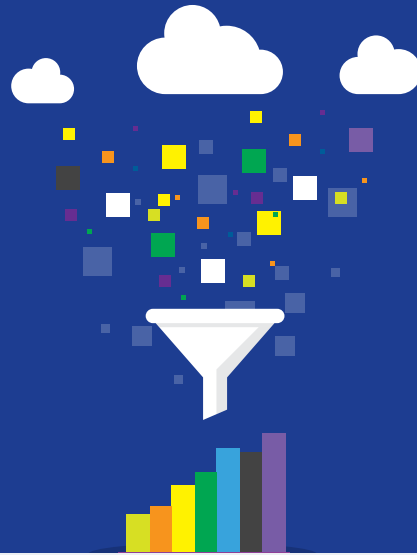
Together with the team at Teenage Cancer Trust, we'll be here to encourage and assist anyone who wants to fundraise.

We'll start by sharing a list of tips and ideas for getting an event or activity off the ground (and in a COVID-safe way). Look out for a separate article soon.

In the meantime, let's give the final work to Nicole, a teenage cancer patient who has a message to share. Click on the laptop screen above to hear it!

TO INFINITY AND BEYOND

We're improving our client insight
to help us take the greatest care.



Following a successful three-month trial in 25 branches across all regions (excluding Northern Ireland) we're implementing a new system to help us better meet our clients' needs from the moment they search for our services online.

We know that more and more clients are using the internet to look for us, often clicking our phone number to call us directly. COVID-19 also means we're getting more phone enquiries than ever as in-person visits are restricted. But although we can see we get 45,000 calls per month from places such as Google My Business, social media or advertising – we can't tell if these potential clients go on to arrange a funeral. This makes it hard to know if we're doing the right thing for them.

The new system, called Infinity, lets us make sure the whole client experience is as good as possible, from their initial visit to our website, to their first phone call, to a branch visit – reassuring our clients that they've made the right choice.

OUR GOLDEN RULES

Don't forget, we should all follow these GOLDEN rules to take the greatest care of our clients over the phone.

How does it work?

Infinity tracks the phone calls we get back to the client, so we can tell which routes to market are working best and which calls go on to become a funeral. Calls will also be recorded, just as we already do in CSC, which means we can better protect you in the event of any disputes and use real-life call examples for future training.

As well as bringing us into line with other client-service led companies, the software also means we can analyse conversations for specific keywords (such as 'price' or

'woodland burials') to give us richer insight into the types of queries our clients are asking and better knowledge to help us create more targeted products and promotions for Pre-Need and Funeral Operations clients.

When will it be in place?

With over 7,200 calls already recorded during the trial, Infinity will be in place across all branches by the end of March 2021, with a pre-recorded message advising clients that calls will be recorded for training and quality assurance purposes.

We'll be prioritising areas with low-price trial branches next, followed by areas with large populations. As we work towards this, colleagues may call a small number of branches to confirm that the phone numbers used in our marketing activity are being correctly routed.

If you have any queries, please ask your line manager in the first instance.

POETRY IN MOTION

With the New Year comes the start of a bold new advertising campaign for Simplicity Cremations.



Turn on the TV this month and you might catch a glimpse of a familiar name – our very own Simplicity Cremations!

We've resumed television advertising for the brand, but with a fresh new narrative to kick-start 2021.

The ads are based on a series of poems through which different people express their preference for this particular type of funeral. Each incorporates the distinctive creative style that Simplicity is becoming increasingly well known for.

And we're not just appearing on TV – there are versions adapted for use on radio, websites and

social media platforms in a campaign that runs until the end of March.

Meanwhile, there will be national press advertorials, magazine inserts and digital display advertising to promote Simplicity Cremations' prepaid funeral plans, maximising opportunities for both parts of the business.

Helen Bradshaw, our Head of Marketing and Brand, said: "We enjoyed an extremely successful year in 2020 thanks to changing client needs, sustained promotion and operational improvements.

"There is also increased recognition for direct cremations, a lot of which is probably down

to the coronavirus pandemic and associated restrictions on funeral attendance.

"With this latest campaign we want to engage with consumers who are either cost-conscious when arranging a funeral, or just looking for something less traditional, and draw their attention to the great service Simplicity Cremations can offer."

Take a look at examples of our TV adverts above

"With this latest campaign we want to engage with consumers who are either cost-conscious when arranging a funeral, or just looking for something less traditional."



NEW LOCKDOWNS BEGIN

Find out more about the latest
COVID-19 restrictions and
what they mean for you.

For many of us, lockdown is back as governments act to combat rising cases of coronavirus.

New 'stay at home' orders apply to all of England and most of Scotland, while similar restrictions are already in place for Wales and Northern Ireland.

No doubt some of you will have questions about how these latest announcements affect us and the way we work.

We've tried to address the main points here, but you can also refer to our [COVID-19 FAQs](#) and raise any specific queries with your line manager.

Can funerals still go ahead?

Funerals are still permitted, but limits remain on the total number of people who can attend the funeral service: 30 in England, 20 in Scotland and 25 in Northern Ireland.

The number of attendees for funerals in Wales depends on the

size of the venue and how many people can be accommodated safely with social distancing measures in place.

Colleagues in funeral operations should continue to follow our [current operational guidance](#).

Should I come to work?

Wherever possible, colleagues should work from home. If your role means this is not possible, please follow the guidance and wear the mandated PPE when needed.

DO NOT come to work if you have COVID-19 symptoms, have been in close contact with a COVID-19 positive case, have been tested and are awaiting the result or have had a positive test.

DO NOT travel between sites unless urgent and essential.

What if I'm told to shield?

The government has said it will be writing to those considered to be extremely clinically vulnerable and advising them to isolate.

If you are told to shield, we will continue to support you through the pandemic. Please speak to your line manager to find out what this means for you in your particular role.

Schools are closed, so what can I do to balance childcare with work?

We appreciate this is a difficult situation to manage and there are some options available. If you're classified as a key worker, then your child or children should still be able to attend school providing there are sufficient places available.

For younger children, early years settings such as nurseries remain open.

For children under 14, you can form a childcare bubble which allows friends or family from one other household to provide informal childcare. Read more about childcare bubbles [here](#).

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Other options include taking annual leave, taking unpaid leave or working flexibly if your role allows. Please speak to your line manager in the first instance to discuss what school closures may mean for you.

How long are these latest restrictions going to last?

England's rules are due to be reviewed on 15 February and Scotland's at the end of January.

Wales has been in a national lockdown (alert level 4) since 20 December and this will continue until at least 29 January.

Northern Ireland entered a six week lockdown on 26 December.



I'm finding it difficult to cope. Who can I ask for help?

These are exceptionally challenging times for us all, professionally and personally.

Never be afraid to ask for help. Speak to a colleague or your line manager, or make use of the many external

resources that promote positive mental health, such as charities.

We've captured some links and contact numbers [here](#). This includes the confidential Employee Assistance Programme available 24/7 to every Dignity colleague.

LETTERS AVAILABLE NOW

Colleagues requiring a new key/critical worker letter of authority can download theirs via the Oracle HCM system.

In light of the current COVID-19 restrictions, those colleagues who are classified as key or critical workers may need to produce a letter of authority from their employer.

It shows any journeys you are making to and from work are deemed essential, plus some schools may ask for proof of your job role status if you're trying to arrange a place for your children.

We last issued letters from Dignity in November 2020 and if you still have yours then you can continue to use it.

However, if you need a new copy, or just want to replace the existing letter with a current dated version, then here's what to do:

- Personalised letters have been distributed via the Oracle HCM system
- Please log in to your **Oracle account** and then click on the menu option labelled 'Document Records'
- Your letter will be the file most recently added – simply print off a copy and you're good to go.



If you have any problems accessing Oracle or locating your letter, please contact HR Shared Services: HR.SharedServices@dignityuk.co.uk / 0121 726 4615.

If you're not an Oracle HCM user, the Shared Services team have arranged to send a new letter in the post.



BREW, NOT BLUE



With a simple cuppa and a meaningful chat, we can help make January a brighter month for all.

Let's face it, January can sometimes seem like an almighty slog.

The weather is cold, the mornings and evenings are dark, we might have overindulged at Christmas, or worse still overspent, resulting in a hefty credit card bill that needs paying.

That's why, in the third week of the month, you might hear people talking about the arrival of Blue Monday. It's when all the above and more appear to combine, leaving us feeling particularly glum.

Now we should remember that low mood or depression can strike at any time, especially when you factor in the unique challenges of the current pandemic and having to live our lives with so many restrictions.

But Blue Monday does at least shine a light on the issues surrounding mental health, encouraging us to focus on our wellbeing and voice any concerns or anxieties we may have.



PUT THE KETTLE ON

We love this clever take on Blue Monday from the charity Samaritans, who have turned it into Brew Monday and are asking people to reach out to friends, family members and colleagues for a cuppa and a chat.

While a lot of gatherings will have to be virtual in 2021, that doesn't make them any less important or effective.

Talking about things that are on your mind can quickly

make a problem appear more manageable. And being there to listen to another person could really help them out.

So will you be having a Brew Monday and striking up a conversation with someone close to you?

How about setting time aside within your team this month to see how everyone is getting on?

Find out more on the **[Samaritans website](#)**.



A CAUTIONARY TALE

Only quick thinking and an eye for detail prevented this client losing thousands in a sophisticated banking scam.

If you think our industry is immune from the unscrupulous actions of cyber criminals, you'd be wrong.

Our colleagues in the South West region have kindly shared this case study in the hope that it will help others spot the tell-tale signs that something fraudulent could be happening.

A client of R Davies & Son in Westbury-on-Trym had been exchanging emails with the branch and requested a digital copy of their invoice in order to arrange payment via the deceased's bank.

They later contacted us to query a large number of additional emails received, some of which they felt were 'odd'. After further investigation, it was clear these were emails the branch hadn't sent.

Cause for concern

What seems to have happened in this instance was the client's email account became compromised and incoming messages – including ours – were intercepted.

The hacker then started imitating Dignity's emails, managing to replicate our sender address and branded footer.



They told the client there was a problem with our usual bank account and that their payment should be directed elsewhere.

In this instance, the client was vigilant and noticed:

- Some messages had spelt their first name incorrectly
- Grammatical errors
- US spelling of words such as cheque ('check')

Act fast

With the client having telephoned to query the correspondence and bank details, FSA Jackie Carn immediately escalated the matter.

This resulted in IT confirming the emails were indeed fraudulent and the case being reported to Action Fraud.

Fortunately no money was lost, but it shows how easy it is for fraudsters to trick their victims and pressurise them into making hasty decisions.

What we tell clients

Every external email we send through Dignity's servers bears a warning about cyber crime and it's worth reminding clients of its importance:

"We will not notify you of any change of bank details via email. If you receive such an email which appears to come from Dignity which is either advising you of a change or is providing different bank details from those already provided, it is unlikely to be genuine and you should contact us immediately. Please do not reply or take any action upon the information provided in that email."

There are lots of tips for identifying fraudulent emails and we've collated some given to us by West Midlands Police – you can read a copy [here](#).

And if you're not sure about an email you've received, simply forward it to security@dignityuk.co.uk and the team will check it out.

INTRODUCING ACORN ANALYTICAL SERVICES

A specialist consultant, Acorn will be helping us carry out building assessments for asbestos throughout 2021.

A few months ago we shared an update from our Property Compliance team confirming that building inspections and testing activities were to resume after being put on hold because of coronavirus.

Since then Dignity has appointed a new contractor – Acorn Analytical Services – who will help us in the management of asbestos.

Part of their role will be to complete surveys at the majority of locations across our estate, including funeral homes, care centres, office premises, some crematoria and our coffin manufacturing facility.

It's a substantial task (more than 900 buildings in fact!), which means Acorn are likely to be conducting visits throughout most of 2021.

What will the visits involve?

Acorn will arrange appointments directly with each location. They will have a valid access code issued by Property and their own ID cards so colleagues can be confident they are dealing with an approved supplier.

The survey involves visually



inspecting a building to determine the presence and condition of any asbestos. It is not intrusive or overly time-consuming and presents no risk to anyone else present.

What if they find asbestos? Should we be worried?

No, issues only usually arise when asbestos is disturbed, for example during maintenance or refurbishment work.

If Acorn do identify any asbestos containing materials in a building they will assess their condition and make a

recommendation for what action should be taken. Often the safest thing is to actually leave them alone and just continue with regular monitoring.

What happens next?

Teams should wait to be contacted by Acorn to schedule a visit.

If you have any queries in the meantime, please speak to your line manager or email the Property department – **Property@dignityuk.co.uk**.

AND THE WINNERS ARE

Well done to our five festive prize winners!

We had a huge response to our Christmas quiz – and with such great prizes up for grabs, it was no wonder!

Sadly, we could only draw five correct answers from Santa's hat. The lucky festive experts were:

★ **1st prize:** £150 Asda voucher - **Annabelle Twyman**, Funeral Arranger at Malcolm Jones & Metcalfe

★ **2nd prize:** Lenovo M7 tablet - **Gillian Duncan**, Memorial Consultant, Dundee Crematorium

★ **3rd prize:** Fitbit Inspire 2 - **Peter Nightingale**, Crematorium Manager, Trent Valley Crematorium

★ **4th prize:** Echo Dot with clock - **Linda Baillie**, Partnership Support Manager, Dignity Pre Arrangement

★ **5th prize:** £25 Greggs voucher - **Lesley Waterworth**, Funeral Service Arranger, Sankey & Monks

If you're wondering if you got the answers right, have a look here:

- 1 How many of Santa's reindeer begin with the letter D? **Three** – Dasher, Dancer and Donner
- 2 In which fictional world, created by CS Lewis, is it always winter but never Christmas? **Narnia**
- 3 Complete the lyrics: 'On the eleventh day of Christmas, my true love sent to me...'
Eleven pipers piping
- 4 Which author wrote 'How the Grinch Stole Christmas' in 1957?
Dr Seuss
- 5 What is Scrooge's first name in the Charles Dickens novel 'A Christmas Carol'?
Ebenezer
- 6 In which decade did Slade have a Christmas number 1 with 'Merry Xmas Everybody'?
1970s
- 7 What is the name of the actor who plays 'Elf' in the popular Christmas film? **Will Ferrell**
- 8 What is the name of the singing snowman in 'Frozen'? **Olaf**
- 9 What time is the Queen's speech traditionally broadcast on Christmas Day? **3pm**
- 10 By what name is St Stephen's Day better known in the UK?
Boxing Day

Congratulations to all of you!